



Keeping in Touch

Rep. Judy Clibborn

Committees

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Health Care
Local Government

Keeping in touch

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Weekly e-memo

If you'd like to get my weekly e-mail about issues, send me an e-mail with the words "SUBSCRIBE" in the subject line.

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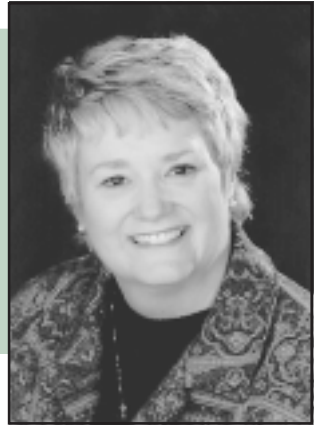
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A Report to the 41st District

Rep. Judy Clibborn



Dear neighbors,

Thank you for the honor and privilege of serving as your representative.

Last year, I talked to more than 16,000 citizens on their front porches, and people kept bringing up same issues:

- Traffic gridlock;
- Public schools and colleges; and
- Health care

These three issues are complicated, and I believe every complex problem has a simple, easy-to-understand wrong answer.

The old politics offered only two tools to fix any problem, big or small: (1) more spending or better oversight, or (2) cutting regulation and taxes. It's a bit like telling a carpenter he can only use one tool – a hammer or a saw – to build a house. I believe there's a third way: focus on reforms and results, not the size of government.

President John F. Kennedy said, "Let us not seek the Republican answer or the Democratic answer, but the right answer."

With a \$2.4 billion hole in our state budget, we need a new spirit of creativity, cooperation and innovation to solve our common problems.

What do you think about traffic, public schools and health care? Please tell me what you think.

Again, thank you for taking the time to read this update. I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Rep. Judy Clibborn


What you'll find inside:

- Improving our schools
- Unclogging traffic gridlock
- Fixing the health-care crisis

Improving our schools

As a parent, I know how important it is that our children get the best possible education. And as executive director of the Mercer Island Chamber of Commerce, I hear from local businesses how important it is they have well-educated workers with the right high-tech skills. The economy doesn't run on horsepower anymore – it runs on brainpower.

I'm working with fellow lawmakers from the Eastside, Republicans and Democrats, to craft reforms to improve our local schools. Every child in our state should get a world-class education.



Simple majority

The first reform I'd like to tell you about is the Simple Majority Act. This legislation allows school levies to pass with a simple majority instead of a supermajority.

It's wrong to let a minority of voters hold our schools back.

How can it be fair to elect lawmakers with 50 percent of the vote, but set a much higher bar for our local schools?

The House passed this reform, and I hope the Senate follows so we can give voters a chance to decide on this constitutional amendment.

Better pay for local teachers

A major problems with our public schools is that teachers get paid the same basic salary whether they live in Aberdeen or Bellevue.

The high cost of living and low salaries are why many teachers on the Eastside are moving to other schools or leaving the profession.

I support a number of bills that would give our schools more flexibility, especially in high-cost areas like the Eastside, to make up for that huge difference in the cost of living. It's the right thing to do if we want to keep our best and brightest teachers in local classrooms.



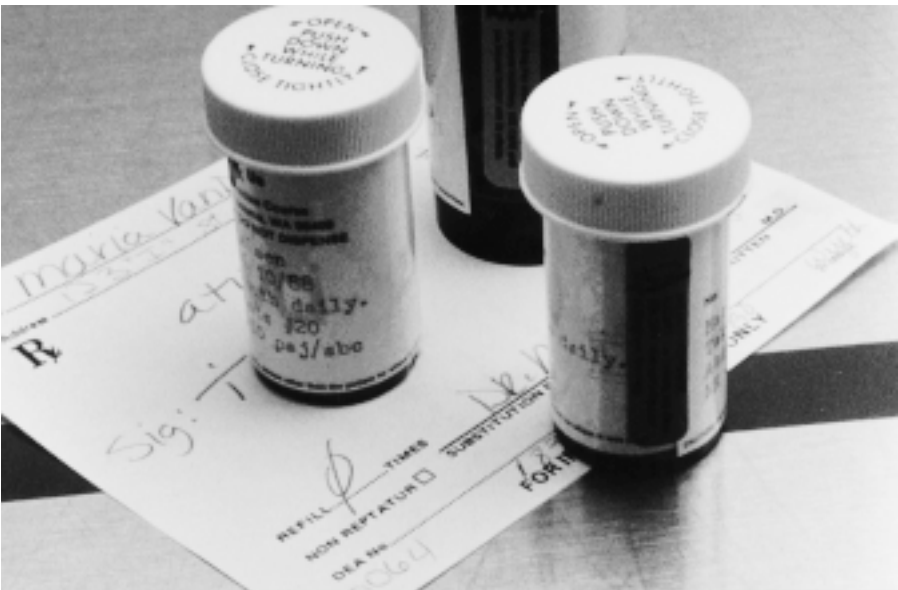
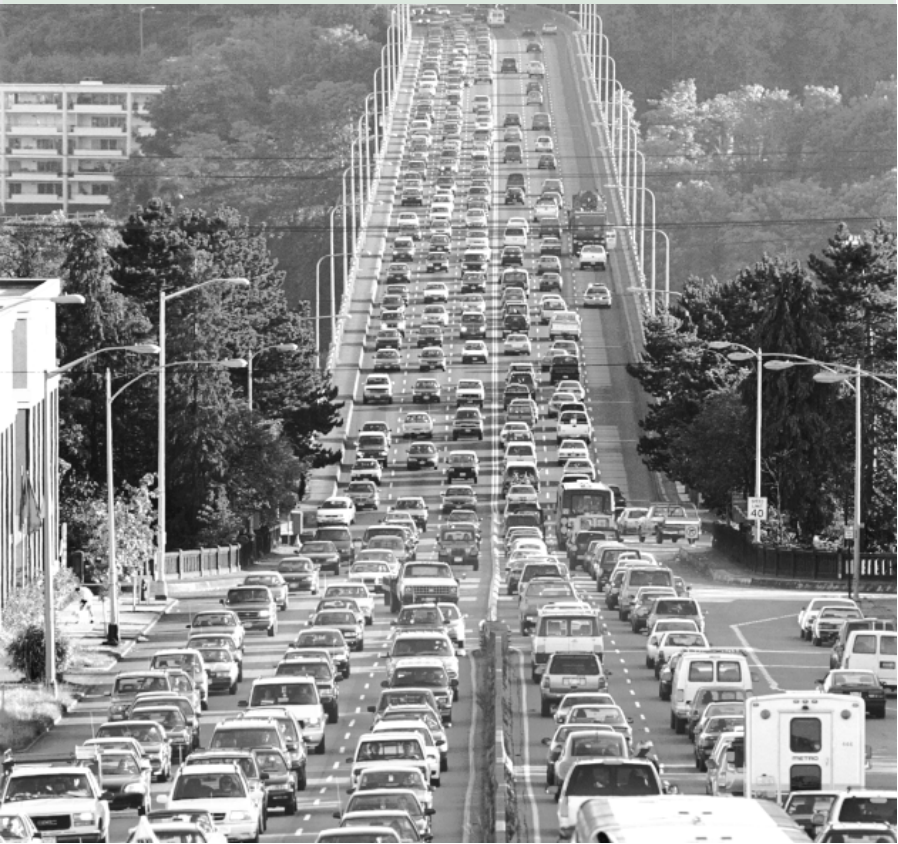
Unclogging traffic gridlock

Traffic gridlock is strangling our economy and quality of life.

There's nothing more aggravating than being stuck in traffic, especially if you're trying to get to work on time, deliver your products or get home to your family.

Traffic is hurting our local businesses. Experts say gridlock costs us at least \$2 billion a year in lost productivity and higher prices. It's simple economics: If a plumber could drive to six houses in a day before and now can only get to four houses, he must raise his rates to make up for the lost time in traffic.

We need a strong state transportation plan to move the projects most needed to improve road safety and unclog traffic congestion. The transportation system works best when we have every option to get the people to work and the goods to market: highways, buses and railroads. I support funding projects that improve safety and are ready to go – we shouldn't waste any more time with planning or studies. Let's get the job done.



Fixing the health care crisis

Prescription medicine

As a registered nurse, I can tell you that getting the right medicine at the right time for the right price can make all the difference to a patient.

But more and more people can't afford the medicines they need. Prescription drugs are becoming the most expensive part of health care.

Unless we tackle it now, the problem will spiral out of control, with deeper budget cuts, more businesses dropping workers from health coverage and thousands more people without any health insurance at all.

Whether the Legislature passes prescription drug reform will make a huge difference this year. Reform will:

- Give people the prescription medicine they need without making them choose between paying for pills or the heating bill;
- Help the state balance the budget, as prescription costs are skyrocketing, driving up the price of health care;
- Cut costs for businesses, especially small businesses hurt by the rising costs of health coverage for workers.

